

**U.S. EPA Lake Tahoe Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act Program
Request for Proposals: Tahoe Science Consortium Activities Project**

Overview

US EPA Region 9 is soliciting proposals for the Lake Tahoe Science Consortium Activities Project. Funding is available for the Lake Tahoe Science Consortium Activities Project through a cooperative agreement. The purpose of this program is to provide funding for a project which implements the Lake Tahoe Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) under the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act, Public Law 106-506. The project will promote the coordination and acceleration of investigations, training, demonstrations, surveys and studies relating to the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction and elimination of pollution. This assistance will be awarded through Section 104 (b)(3) of the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. §1254(b).

The Tahoe Science Consortium will provide the resources to support research and related activities for environmental restoration within the Lake Tahoe basin. The goal will be achieved by meeting three distinct objectives: (1) developing and updating a long-term, comprehensive research plan that focuses on the restoration needs of Lake Tahoe, the Lake Tahoe Basin Science Plan; (2) providing the independent scientific review of research proposals and products related to Lake Tahoe Basin restoration efforts; and (3) providing scientific input, as requested by planning, regulatory and implementing agencies in the Lake Tahoe Basin. **See full text of announcement for details.**

The project funded as a result of this announcement must support the following goals and objectives of the strategy that EPA is using to meet the requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act: Water Program Goal 2 (Clean and Safe Water, Objective 2 (Protect Water Quality), Sub-objective 1 (Improve water quality on a watershed basis).

This is an initial solicitation.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Numbers: 66.436.

Important Dates:

Sept 26, 2005	Proposals must be received by EPA.
Oct. 18, 2005	Applicants identified for funding will be requested to submit a formal application package.
Nov 18, 2005	Completed grant application and work plan must be submitted to EPA.
Jan 15, 2006	Awards made.

Please note the schedule may be modified based on the level of response.

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**U.S. EPA Lake Tahoe Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act Program Request
for Proposals: Tahoe Science Consortium Activities Project**

Full Text Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

US EPA Region 9 is soliciting proposals for the Lake Tahoe Science Consortium Activities Project. Funding is available for the Lake Tahoe Science Consortium Activities Project through a cooperative agreement. The purpose of this program is to provide funding for a project which implements the Lake Tahoe Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) under the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act, Public Law 106-506. The project will promote the coordination and acceleration of investigations, training, demonstrations, surveys and studies relating to the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction and elimination of pollution. This assistance will be awarded through Section 104 (b)(3) of the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. §1254(b).

Tahoe Science Consortium project: This project will provide the resources to support research and related activities for environmental restoration within the Lake Tahoe basin. These activities, performed by the Tahoe Science Consortium, will then enable a more efficient linkage between environmental restoration agency information needs and the research community that produces such information. The outcome for this project is to allow for overall increases in the effectiveness of the environmental restoration efforts within the Lake Tahoe basin, based on more robust scientific information.

This outcome will be achieved by meeting three distinct objectives, or outputs: (1) developing and updating a long-term, comprehensive research plan that focuses on the restoration needs of Lake Tahoe, the Lake Tahoe Basin Science Plan; (2) providing the independent scientific review of research proposals and products related to Lake Tahoe Basin restoration efforts; and (3) providing scientific input, as requested by planning, regulatory and implementing agencies in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

To function effectively, the Tahoe Science Consortium will need to provide support for a wide range of activities associated with development and management of a long-term comprehensive science plan, scientific peer-review, and science and monitoring program development functions. Such activities may include, but are not limited to: developing, organizing, facilitating, managing, and logistics for teleconferences, meetings, workshops, and scientific peer-review activities; provide training and outreach to agencies, the public, and the scientific community; provide progress memoranda; developing white papers or other scientific communications; managing reimbursements for non-profit and/or academic experts for scientific peer-review and development of the Lake Tahoe Basin Science Plan; maintaining electronic or other records to track the products of the Tahoe Science Consortium Activities Project, including activities associated with development and revisions of the Lake Tahoe Basin Science Plan; and coordinating, as appropriate, with other groups including agencies, tribes, stakeholders, and the public; input data, as necessary, to assure that the Lake Tahoe Basin Science Plan is coordinated with appropriate databases, e.g., the Tahoe Integrated Information Management System (TIIMS); facilitate development of subsequent versions of the Lake Tahoe Basin Science Plan; and other adaptive management activities necessary to assure the success of the science and research in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

The project funded as a result of this announcement must support the following goals and objectives of the strategy that EPA is using to meet the requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act: Water Program Goal 2 (Clean and Safe Water, Objective 2 (Protect Water Quality), Sub-objective 1 (Improve water quality on a watershed basis). This assistance will be awarded through Section 104 (b)(3) of the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. §1254(b).

II. Award Information

EPA Region 9 intends to award up to \$200,000 for the Tahoe Science Consortium Project Activities. From the proposals received, EPA will select one proposal to submit a full application. This award will be a cooperative agreement, since EPA intends to have substantial involvement with the project work plans and budgets.

Funding for this project is not guaranteed and is subject to the availability of funds. EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals or applications and make no awards.

III. Eligibility Information

EPA is soliciting proposals from States, territories, Indian Tribes, and possessions of the U.S. (including the District of Columbia); public and private universities and colleges; hospitals; laboratories; and other public or private nonprofit institutions and individuals. For-profit organizations are not eligible for this funding. Nonprofit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1955 are not eligible to apply.

No matching funds are required.

IV. Application and Submission Information

Proposal narratives must be limited to 6 pages (excess pages will not be reviewed), 11-12 point times new roman font, single line spaced. Full application packages should not be submitted at this time. It is recommended that confidential information not be included in the proposal. The detailed budget does not count toward the page limit and may be attached separately.

The following format must be used for all proposals:

1. Name of Project: Tahoe Science Consortium Activities Project
2. Applicant contact information (Individual and Organization Name, Address, Phone Number, Fax Number, E-mail Address)
3. Requested funding
4. Proposed Budget--Clearly identify categories for funding distribution (personnel, benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual, etc).
5. Project description: provide a detailed description of how applicant proposes to conduct the project, including basic project design/approach, and project management. This section must address the details outlined in Section I: Funding Opportunity Description, including deliverables and outcomes. The qualifications of the applicant to conduct this project must also be discussed.
6. Outreach, Communication and Information Transfer: Plan for distributing project results to the public and interested parties. This plan must include a detailed description as to how the applicant proposes to ensure the transfer of knowledge gained by the project.
7. Outcome/Result Tracking and Reporting: Discuss items a – c below and also provide list of public agencies that have previously awarded grants to applicant and documentation that proves past performance with those awards was successful.
 - a) Plan for tracking, measuring, and reporting progress toward achieving expected outcomes/outputs. Proposals must address the applicant's past performance in documenting the achievement of expected outcomes/outputs including, if applicable,

- satisfactory explanations of why outcomes/outputs were not achieved
- b) Describe past performance in filing timely progress reports and final technical reports that document the achievement of expected outcomes/outputs or a satisfactory explanation of why the outcomes/outputs were not achieved.
 - c) Describe ability to specify and measure the expected environmental outputs/outcomes and performance measures to be accomplished as a result of the project.
8. Programmatic Capability: Discuss items a – d below and also provide a list, with contact information) of past or current projects and/or references to support the discussion. Please note that in conducting the programmatic capability evaluation, the Agency will consider the information submitted by the applicant as well as relevant information from other sources including Agency files.
- a) Describe past performance in successfully completing federally and/or non-federally funded projects similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project.
 - b) Describe history of meeting reporting requirements on prior or current assistance agreements with federal and/or non-federal organizations and submitting acceptable final technical reports.
 - c) Describe organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the project.
 - d) Describe staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the project.

Confidentiality: In accordance with 40 CFR 2.203, applicants may claim all or a portion of their application/proposal as confidential business information. EPA will evaluate confidentiality claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. Applicants must clearly mark applications/proposals or portions of applications/proposals they claim as confidential. If no claim of confidentiality is made, EPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant otherwise required by 40 CFR 2.204(c)(2) prior to disclosure.

All applicants applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a Dun and Bradstreet Universal Data Numbering System (DUNS) number. Applicants that do not already have a DUNS number may find instructions for obtaining one at the following website:
<http://www.grants.gov/GetStarted>.

Applicants may choose ONE of the following options to submit proposals.

Option #1 – Traditional Application – Direct Submission

Please send 2 paper copies (double-sided preferred), and one electronic copy (via email) of the proposal to:

Bobbye (Barbara M.) Smith, Coordinator
U.S. EPA Region 9 (PMD-1)
75 Hawthorne St.
San Francisco, CA 94105
smith.bobbye@epa.gov

Only the following formats are acceptable for electronic submission: MS Word, WordPerfect, MS Excel, Lotus 123 or PDF. Documents prepared in other formats will not be accepted.

All proposals, both paper and electronic copies, must be received by EPA by **5:00pm PST September 26, 2005**. Proposals received after the deadline will not be reviewed or considered for funding under this announcement.

Option #2 – Electronic Application - Fedgrants.gov Apply

EPA is participating in the Grants.gov Initiative that provides the Grant Community a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. Through this program applicants may choose to submit their applications electronically through <http://www.grants.gov/Apply>.

On the site, you will find step-by-step instructions which enable you to apply for EPA funds. There are six “Get Started” steps to complete at Grants.gov. The information applicants need to understand and execute the steps can be found at <http://www.grants.gov/GetStarted>. Applicants should read the Get Started steps carefully BEFORE selecting this option. The site also contains registration checklists to help you walk through the process. EPA recommends that you download the checklists and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling required information before beginning the registration process will make the process fast and smooth and save time.

All applicants applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a Dun and Bradstreet Universal Data Numbering System (DUNS) number. The DUNS number must be included in the data entry field labeled “Organizational Duns” on the form SF-424. Instructions for obtaining a DUNS number can be found at the following website: <http://www.grants.gov/GetStarted>.

In order to view the application package, you will need to download the PureEdge viewer (hyperlink available under “Get Started” then “Get Started Step 2”). You may then access the application package at https://apply.grants.gov/forms_apps_idx.html using the CFDA number of 66.436. Also, each synopsis on Grants.gov has a link to Apply Electronically for that opportunity at the bottom of the page. It is recommended that you “Register to Receive Notification” of announcement updates.

The actual submission of your application must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with <http://www.grants.gov/> (most investigators will not be eligible to submit the application). Please see <http://www.grants.gov/>, “Get Started” for further information. The registration process may take a week or longer. Please check with your Sponsored Programs, or equivalent, office to locate your official representative and see if your institution is registered. If your institution is not currently registered, encourage your official representative to begin the process immediately.

Please complete the following and transfer a completed application to <http://www.grants.gov/> no later than **5:00pm PST September 26, 2005**. Applications submitted through Fedgrants.gov Apply after the deadline will not be considered. If you are unable to complete this process, we recommend you submit a Traditional Application – Direct Submission as described in Option #1 above.

A. Application for Federal Assistance and Budget Information (SF-424A)

1. Complete the form.

B. Project Narrative Attachment Form

1. Prepare a proposal narrative as described in the RFP and attach it here. Documents that are attached to the Grants.gov package must be submitted in Adobe Acrobat PDF format to maintain format integrity.

Save your completed application package with two different names before submission to avoid having to re-create the package should you experience submission problems. If you experience submission problems contact customer support at (800) 518-GRANTS or email support@grants.gov and copy smith.bobbye@epa.gov. The customer support center is open from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Eastern time, Monday through Friday, except federal holidays, to address Grants.gov technology issues. For technical assistance to program related questions, contact Bobbye Smith (see agency contacts in this notice).

V. Application Review Information

EPA will award the cooperative agreement on a competitive basis. Applicants must address the review criteria when writing proposals. Proposals will be evaluated and scored based on the following criteria, with a maximum score of 100 points.

1. How well the proposed project responds to the desired outcomes and outputs for the identified in this notice (Section I). (20 points)
2. Scientific and technical feasibility of the proposal. (10 points)
3. The inclusion of multiple research entities as proponent teams. (10 points)
4. Cost effectiveness of the proposal. (10 points)
5. How well the project furthers the goal of the Clean Water Act to prevent, reduce, and eliminate pollution. (10 points)
6. Strength of partnerships and community outreach (e.g., participation/peer review by other stakeholders) as part of the proposed approach. (10 points)
7. Communication plan to transfer results of the project. How well the plan transfers knowledge gained as a result of the project to relevant and interested communities. (10 points)
8. How well the applicant has defined a plan for outcome result tracking and reporting and past performance in managing grants as discussed in response to Section IV #7 of this announcement. (10 points)
9. Strength of applicant's programmatic capability and past performance as discussed in response to Section IV #8 of this announcement. The applicant's programmatic capability evaluation and score will be based on the information submitted in the proposal/application, the Grantee Compliance Database, and other available relevant information. (10 points)

The proposals will be evaluated by US EPA staff. Final selection for the Tahoe Science Consortium Activities Project will be made by the Director of the US EPA Region 9 Water Division. The selected entity will be notified and requested to submit a full application.

VI. Award Administration Information

Applicants selected for continuance in the process will be sent a guidance letter with the URL to access the grant application kit for funding. These recipients will be invited to submit a detailed work plan and the completed grant application for funding. Receipt of an application kit is not a guarantee of funding. Deadlines must be met and the work plan must be approved by the EPA Project Officer for funding to occur.

Regulations governing the award and administration of these cooperative agreements: 40 CFR part 30 (for institutions of higher learning, hospitals, and other non-profit organizations) and 40 CFR part 31 (for States, local governments, and interstate agencies).

Quarterly project status reports and Financial Status Reports will be required. Quarterly project status reports should describe project activities and provide the EPA Project Officer with information about

project development. The Financial Status Report must accurately account for all federal funds expended and identify appropriate use of federal funds.

Disputes: Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at

<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20051800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005/05-1371.htm>.

Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting Bobbye Smith (below).

Awards to non-profit organizations: Non-profit applicants that are recommended for funding will be subject to pre-award administrative capability reviews consistent with Sections 8.b, 8.c and 9.d of EPA Order 5700.8 which can be found at: http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700_8.pdf

VII. Agency Contacts

For additional information, please contact:

Bobbye (Barbara M.) Smith

Phone: (415) 972-3735

Fax: (415) 947-3558

Email: <mailto:smith.bobbye@epa.gov>

or

Jane Freeman

Phone: (775) 588-4547

Email: jfreeman.jane@epa.gov

VIII. Other Information

To provide relevant context for proposals, applicants are encouraged to review additional information about the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act (SNPLMA),

<http://www.nv.blm.gov/snplma/default.asp>.